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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 003310

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DRL/PHD FOR SUSAN O'SULLIVAN

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [MARR](#) [CH](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH ON EU/CHINA ARMS EMBARGO

REF: A. USEU BRUSSELS 3159

[1](#)B. USEU BRUSSELS 2896

Classified By: USEU Poloff Van Reidhead for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) DRL Senior Advisor Susan O'Sullivan and poloff met July 23 with Human Rights Watch (HRW) Brussels Director Lotte Leicht to discuss the EU drive to lift its arms embargo on China. Leicht said that HRW is working with Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights in China (HRIC), and likeminded members of the European Parliament (EP) to develop a strategy for activism over the coming critical months. HRW believes that European publics and parliaments need to become much more active in order to prevent the EU from lifting its embargo this fall. Leicht said she was considering putting the issue on the agenda of the EP's Human Rights Contact Group, which also involves representatives from the Council Secretariat and Commission, during its fall term (HRW and

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other NGOs will collectively chair the Contact Group from September to December). HRW also planned to get relatives of Tiananmen victims to speak out in the EP and other European parliaments. Leicht encouraged the US to "engage the full spectrum" of European MPs/MEPs -- appealing to HR concerns on the left and Transatlantic relations on the right -- to build bipartisan support for maintaining the embargo. (NOTE: USEU is working with Liberal-Democratic EP leader Graham Watson to secure another EP resolution in the September-October timeframe.)

[1](#)2. (C) Arguing forcefully that lifting the embargo would deliver China a huge and unearned propaganda victory, Leicht said that HRW was taking the position that instead of lifting the embargo, the EU should issue a political declaration laying out the specific HR steps China would need to take in order to lift the embargo in the future. EU leaders should not be permitted to manipulate China's HR record in order to curry political or commercial favor from China, she said. She thought the only way to prevent that was to cultivate sufficient public pressure to force leaders to define tough conditions, including resolving all outstanding Tiananmen issues, for lifting the embargo. Leicht suggested that increased cooperation among likeminded NGOs, MPs/MEPs, and third countries would add value to our parallel efforts (NOTE: We are working with Leicht to host a small roundtable of likeminded groups at USEU to discuss this idea).

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